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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 20 May 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia regarding the armed attack on five young men which took place in the Sachkhere district on 18 May 2011 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 20 May 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the armed attack on five young men which took place in the Sachkhere district on 18 May 2011

Five young men (aged 17, 21, 22, 26 and 27) from the village of Chalvani were picking capers in the Chonto valley (Sachkhere district), in the immediate vicinity of the occupation line, at about 8 a.m. on 18 May, when representatives of the occupation regime in Tskhinvali tried to detain them. The young men managed to escape. However, their armed attackers opened fire on them. Two of them were wounded, of whom one — a 17-year-old pupil of a local school — still remains in grave condition.

The Georgian side assesses this incident as yet another criminal act of unjustifiable brutality committed by the occupation troops, an act which is responsible for an extreme escalation of the situation in the territories adjacent to Georgia's occupied regions. One should not forget that up to 10 local citizens have been taken into custody by the Tskhinvali proxy regime, and that these people remain in prison despite the international community's insistent demands that they be released. Obviously, the Russian Federation and its proxy regimes continue to pursue their aggressive policy of destabilization designed to terrorize the local population. The Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that all responsibility for the 18 May incident and for the fate of those detained rests with the Russian Federation, as an occupying State. It is time for the Russian Federation to learn to comply with its own commitments and for it to be held responsible for the criminal acts carried out directly by Russian troops or under their patronage.

Irresponsible and criminal acts perpetrated by the Russian occupation troops and the proxy regimes are an important factor in causing instability. Of special interest is the fact that, following a series of terrorist acts masterminded from the occupied territories, the occupation forces have now switched to a new style of provocation. Such incidents should be held to be gross violations perpetrated by the Russian Federation of the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement as well as of universally recognized norms and principles of international law. The Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs calls upon the Russian Federation to immediately start complying with the 12 August agreement and to take active steps in order to investigate and prevent terrorist acts and similar incidents. A first tangible step in this direction would be taken if the Russian Federation would commit to the non-use of force with respect to Georgia and would provide access to Georgia's occupied territories for international police and peacekeeping forces. It is only through a considerable international presence that similar incidents can be avoided and that security and stability can be achieved in the occupied regions and their adjacent territories.

The Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also calls upon the international community to duly assess this latest incident. The Georgian side will raise the issue of terrorist acts, criminal incidents and the illegal detention of persons at the Geneva

discussions and during the forthcoming meeting of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms, and will categorically demand that the Russian Federation put an end to such provocative and destabilizing actions.

Tbilisi, 18 May 2011